

Message Text

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72

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 MBFR-03 IO-12 OIC-04 AEC-11

ACDA-19 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12 SAJ-01

H-02 NSC-10 SS-15 RSR-01 /153 W
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R 241250 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1371

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 2381

VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL

OSLO PLEASE PASS TO MR. SVEN GROENNINGS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MCAP, NL, US, NATO

SUBJECT: US TROOPS IN EUROPE

SUMMARY: DUTCH PARLIAMENTARIANS RETURNING FROM BRUSSELS
MEETING OF NAA TOLD EUR POLICY PLANNING DIRECTOR GROENNINGS
THAT THEY WERE STRUCK BY SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN THINKING OF US
CONGRESSIONAL REPS IN FAVOR OF UNILATERAL US TROOPS REDUCTIONS.
THEY ALSO EXPRESSED UNCERTAINTY ABOUT CURRENT US THINKING ON
NATO STRATEGY, PARTICULARLY RE TACNUCS. END SUMMARY.
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1. DURING COURSE OF MAY 22 DISCUSSION WITH EUR POLICY PLANNING DIRECTOR SVEN GROENINGS, TWO PROMINENT DUTCH PARLIAMENTARIANS WHO ATTENDED NAA MEETING IN BRUSSELS SAID THEY DETECTED SIGNIFICANT SHIFT IN THINKING OF US CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN FAVOR OF UNILATERAL REDUCTION OF US TROOP STRENGTH IN EUROPE OUTSIDE OF MBFR FRAMEWORK. MPS DANKERT (LABOR PARTY) AND VAN ELSEN (CATHOLIC PARTY DEFENSE SPOKESMAN IN SECOND CHAMBER) SAID THAT IN COMPARISON WITH TWO YEARS AGO OR EVEN LAST YEAR, EXTENT OF SHIFT IN THIS DIRECTION WAS STRIKING AND CITED AS EXAMPLE CHANGE IN POSITION TAKEN BY WAYNE HAYS. VAN ELSEN SAID HE TOOK PESSIMISTIC VIEW AND EXPECTED US TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS FARLY SOON, WHETHER OR NOT MBFR NEGOTIATIONS SUCCEED. HE ADDED THAT IF HE IS RIGHT US SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT RESULT WOULD BE DECREASE RATHER THAN INCREASE IN DEFENSE EFFORT OF EUROPEANS.

2. GROENINGS RESPONDED BY REITERATING PRESIDENT' S PLEDGE THAT GIVEN SIMILAR EFFORT BY ALLES THIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT UNILATERALLY REDUCE TROOP STRENGTH IN EUROPE. HE ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT MBFR TALKS WOULD PERMIT LOWERING OF LEVEL OF CONFRONTATION IN EUROPE AND SAID COMMENTS SUCH AS THOSE BY SENATOR KENNEDY IN BRUSSELS WERE NOT HELPFUL IN US NEGOTIATING EFFORT. GROENINGS ALSO EXPRESSED STRONG DOUBTS THAT SENATOR MANSFIELD HAD ENOUGH VOTES TO FORCE UNILATERAL US REDUCTIONS. VAN ELSEN AND OTHER PARLIAMENTARIANS PRESENT EXPRESSED FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT WATERGATE AFFAIRS WOULD WEAKEN PRESIDENT' S POSITION VIS- A- VIS CONGRESS AND THAT AS RESULT MANSFIELD EFFORT MIGHT SUCCEED.

3. BOTH VAN ELSEN AND DANKER, WHO IS LEADING CANDIDATE TO BECOME EITHER CHAIRMAN OF SECOND CHAMBER DEFENSE OR FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, WERE STRUCK BY STATEMENT MADE BY SENATOR KENNEDY THAT US NO LONGER BELIEVED IN LIKELIHOOD OF LONG- TERM CONVENTIONAL WAR IN EUROPE AND THAT THEREFORE LARGE US LOGISTIC TAIL IN EUROPE ASSOCIATED WITH CURRENT M PLUS 90 STRATEGY COULD BE CUT SUBSTANTIALLY. DANKERT ALSO REFERRED TO DEFENSE PORTION OF KISSINGER' S APRIL 23 SPEECH AND ASKED WHETHER US POSSIBLY HAD IN MIND BRITISH- FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCES TAKING OVER DETERRENT ROLE NOW BEING FILLED BY US TACNUCS. ON FIRST POINT, GROENINGS SAID KENNEDY WAS SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF, NOT THE ADMINISTRATION.

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ON TACNUCS, GROENINGS SAID KISSINGER EXPRESSED US DESIRE TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CONSENSUS ON SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING ROLE OF TACNUCS, IN LIGHT OF CHANGED STRATEGIC SITUATION. REGARDING SPECIFIC POINT RAISED BY DANKERT RE BRITISH- FRENCH FORCES, GROENINGS SAID US NOT PROPOSING SUCH CHANGE BUT WOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ANY PROPOSAL ALONG THOSE LINES

DEVELOPED BY EUROPEAN ALLIES.

4. ABOVE NOT CLEARED WITH GROENNINGS, WHO DEPARTED THE HAGUE
SHORTLY AFTER MEETING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS, AND IS SUBJECT TO
CHANGES OR ADDITIONS HE MAY WISH TO MAKE.

MIDDENDORF

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